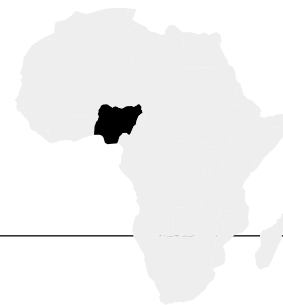

NIGERIA



BACKGROUND

In its 39 years of independence, Nigeria has experienced just 10 years of governance under a democratically elected leader. The country's most recent episode of military rule began with the overthrow of a civilian regime first elected in 1979. It ended in 1998 with the death of Nigeria's military leader General Sani Abacha and the fulfillment of a long-delayed promise by the military of a return to civilian governance. The 1998 and 1999 state, regional, and national elections culminated in the May 1999 inauguration of Olusegun Obasanjo. Despite national and international euphoria over a return to civilian rule, these elections have been viewed as merely a first step in addressing the magnitude of Nigeria's problems. Apart from the normal policy issues that any national government must address—the need to deliver basic services, develop and maintain sound fiscal and monetary policy, and guide foreign policy—several issues that have plagued Nigeria since independence in 1960 remain. These include reestablishing and clarifying the role of the military inside of Nigeria; balancing religious, tribal and regional conflicts; maintaining a basis for and trust in good governance at all levels, controlling corruption, and developing broad-based economic growth; and finally, renewing public confidence in the state's ability to deliver quality basic social services to its people—health and sanitation, education, and the rule of law.

Nigeria is home to abundant natural resources and substantial human resources in the form of an educated urban elite, innovative entrepreneurs, and private sector participants with knowledge of international business standards and practices. Its deposits of natural gas may be the world's largest and could power not only its own growth but also much of West Africa's. Nigeria's agricultural potential is largely untapped and could provide jobs and food for Nigerians and others. However, years of failed incentives, limited access to credit and technology, and a negative investment environment have taken a heavy toll on the economy.

Nigeria's economy has been relatively stagnant and inflation prone since 1992. It is hamstrung by top-down and ineffective but pervasive state control and intervention. Real incomes in Nigeria have actually fallen in the last two decades. Sharp declines in oil prices in 1998 cost Nigeria around 50% of its expected export revenues and a large share (an estimated 40%) of government revenue. Oil sales account for 95% of Nigeria's export revenue. Despite important economic steps taken under former Head of State Abubakar (e.g., unification of the exchange rate), per capita income in Nigeria is less than US\$300. Poverty levels may be as high as 60%, while unemployment and underemployment affect at least half of the labor force. External debt is roughly \$30 billion with annual debt service payments near \$2 billion, relative to current annual exports of just under \$20 billion. This debt overhang is almost equal to half of Nigeria's GDP. While Nigeria's debt service ratio is not nearly as serious as that of many other African countries, the existence of such a large debt reduces the government's ability to finance social sector programs and frightens off private investors.

One of the most compelling issues is the social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS on Nigeria's growth and poverty alleviation efforts. The problem may be larger than assumed and growing. If unchecked now, HIV/AIDS is likely to devastate Nigeria's labor force over the next decade.

Nigeria Social and Economic Indicators	Nigeria 1997	Nigeria 1994	Sub-Saharan Africa 1994
Population Structure & Growth			
Population (millions)	121.7	-	563.82
% Population 0 to 14	56	-	-
Population growth rate	3	3.0 ^{1, 3}	-
Urban population as % of total population	41	-	30.6
Mortality & Life Expectancy			
Infant mortality rate	112	-	91 ⁶
Under 5 mortality rate	187 ²	-	147 ⁶
Life expectancy (m/f)	51/55 ⁵	-	49/52 ⁶
Economic Performance & Expenditures			
GNP per capita (\$)	310	260 ^{1, 5}	489
GNP growth rate	2	-	-1 ^{1, 3}
Military expenditure as % of GNP	3 ²	-	-
Public spending on education as % of GNP (all levels)	3 ²	-	4.3
Development Assistance & Debt			
Official development assistance per capita (\$)	1.70 ⁷	-	-
Official development assistance as % of GNP	0.6 ⁵	-	-
Total external debt (billions, \$)	29.42 ⁷	-	-
Total external debt as % of GNP	114	-	74.4
Illiteracy			
Adult illiteracy (m/f)	30/48 ⁷	34/54 ^{1, 4}	35/52 ⁴

Primary Source: *World Development Report: Knowledge for Development*, World Bank, 1999.

¹Statistical Profile of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SPESSA), UNESCO/World Bank Data, 1998.

²Status of the World's Children 1999—Education, New York: United Nations Children's Fund, 1999.

³Data from 1990-1996.

⁴Data from 1995.

⁵Data from 1996.

⁶Data from 1997.

⁷Data from 1998.

STATUS OF NIGERIA'S EDUCATION REFORM

Since its independence in 1960, Nigeria's educational system has experienced marked expansion as a result of economic growth and the implementation of a Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy in the mid-1970s. However, by the mid-1980s, this expansion gave way to contraction caused by economic depression linked to a decline in global oil prices. A prolonged period of neglect and decay under successive military regimes through the 1980s and 1990s further cemented Nigeria's decline. During this latter period, inadequate sector financing and staff development contributed to the education system's collapse, evidenced by greatly diminished learning outcomes.

Political developments in 1999, and the commitment of President Obasanjo to the sector, suggest that Nigeria is poised to rebuild and revitalize what was once one of the best educational systems in Africa. Approximately 50% of the country's population, or 55 million, are children under the age of 15, yet education's share of the national budget remains less than 20%, one of the lowest in Africa. Estimates of net primary school enrollment are 60% for boys and 58% for girls. Only 15.5 million of the 18.6 million primary school-aged children are actually enrolled. The national average for completion is 62% for girls and 59% for boys, with wide regional variations, and questionable gains for those who do finish. Gender disparity in favor of boys is apparent in the six Northeastern states and the seven Northwestern states, and for girls in the five predominantly Igbo speaking Southeastern states. Adult functional literacy is 39% for women and 63% for men. The World Bank estimates that a 60% literacy rate is necessary for development to take hold; Nigeria's rate is just 51%.

In sum, primary schools lack basic infrastructure, supplies, and instructional materials. Teachers are under-trained and largely unmotivated as a result of recurrent strikes and low salaries. There is inefficiency in planning, monitoring, supervision, and evaluation of the schools by the federal and state government education agencies. Management information systems are antiquated or nonexistent and there is concern that Nigeria's students and citizenry lack access to fundamental technology and information generated around the world. Curriculum at the primary level, last reviewed in 1990, is overloaded, with as many as 14 subjects; and teachers are poorly trained, with less than 10% receiving in-service training during the last two years. There is a noticeable lack of participation in the education sector by civil society groups and communities due in part to the dwindling education budgets, mismanagement, corruption, and neglect.

Similar characteristics prevail at the secondary level. Secondary school enrollments have declined markedly over the past several years due to inadequate public financing, increasing private costs, a serious decline in quality, and a stagnating demand for secondary school graduates in the labor market. Today there are dire needs for rehabilitating school facilities, improving conditions of service for teachers, providing adequate supplies, equipment and instructional materials, and building overall management capacity. The provision of technical and vocational education also remains inadequate, with poorly trained teachers and outmoded equipment and facilities.

Nigeria has two problems that unfortunately are mutually reinforcing—very high levels of youth unemployment and significant unmet demand for employees with higher level skills. The lack of jobs for new labor force entrants is a major concern and ultimately a source of conflict and crime, especially in regions such as the Niger Delta.

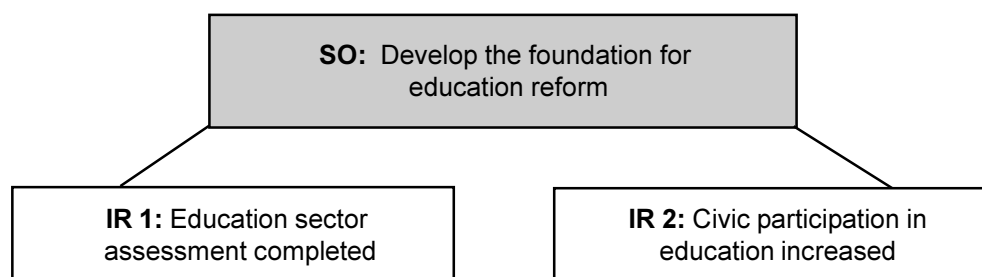
In September of 1999, President Obasanjo announced a policy of universal basic education that will provide formal primary and junior secondary education for all children, nomadic education for school-age children of pastoral nomads and migrant fishermen, and literacy and nonformal education for out-of-school children, youth, and illiterate adults. The policy, to be implemented over a 6-year period, promises to catalyze the active participation of all stakeholder groups—legislators, administrators, NGOs, teachers, parents, and students. Its success will provide a basis for a revitalized Nigeria.

USAID PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The primary objective of USAID's work in the education sector is to speed the country's transition to democratic governance, and economic and social development. To this end, USAID will assist the newly elected government to develop the foundation for education reform. USAID will support a Nigerian-led sector assessment of education at all levels, facilitation of policy dialogue, and the initiation of activities that encourage broad civic participation in the reform process.

Taking care to coordinate this two-year transition program with other donors, USAID will likely undertake several important reform-oriented studies that examine issues such as teacher development, curriculum and assessment, and institutional capacity building. These and various pilot activities will inform any USAID longer-term, more comprehensive, sector support programs.

Strategic Objective and Intermediate Results



Program Title, Funding, and Dates

Basic Education, SO 3

Project Number: (forthcoming)

Funding level

\$18.7 [estimated; includes \$4 million for President Clinton's Education for Democracy and Development Initiative (EDDI)]

Expected obligation and completion dates

FY 2000-02

Program Conditionalities

None at time of publication. USAID does not currently provide nonproject assistance to Nigeria.

Project Contractors

None at time of publication.

Nigeria Education Indicators 1996 (unless otherwise indicated)	Nigeria 1996¹	Nigeria 1994	Sub-Saharan Africa 1994
Primary (Grades 1-7)			
Total enrollment (thousands)	-	16,191	-
Gross enrollment ratio	89	89	76.7
Gross enrollment ratio, female	79	79	69.2
Teachers (thousands)	-	435.2	-
Teachers, % female	-	46	38.2
Pupil-teacher ratio	-	37:1	41:1
Secondary (Grades 8-12)			
Total enrollment (thousands)	-	4,451	-
Gross enrollment ratio	33	30	26.5
Gross enrollment ratio, female	28	28	24.4
Teachers (thousands)	-	152.6	-
Teachers, % female	-	36	-
Pupil-teacher ratio	-	31	-
Tertiary			
Total enrollment (thousands)	-	-	-
Gross enrollment ratio	-	-	3.1
Gross enrollment ratio, female	-	-	-
Finance			
Education as % of GNP	0.90	1.19	4.3
Primary education as % of total education budget	-	-	-
Per pupil expenditure, primary (\$)	-	-	-

Primary Source: *Statistical Profile of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SPESSA)*, UNESCO/World Bank Data, 1998.

¹*The State of the World's Children 1999: Education*. UNICEF. 1999. Data is from 1990-1996.

OTHER DONORS WITH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Other donors include the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the United Kingdom.

